

The Daily Movie Magazine

CLOSE-UPS of the MOVIE GAME

By HENRY M. NEELY

How They Keep Their Fingers on the Pulse of the Fans

IN OUR weekly review of the local photoplay houses last week we spoke of the fact that some of the most artistic pictures put out during the last year have been commercial failures, while "hokum" is riding its way to record-breaking successes. It struck me that it would be interesting to find out exactly how the big producers keep their fingers on the pulse of the public, so, as "Sentimental Tommy" was mentioned as a pathetic example of a good picture gone wrong, I went to the offices of the producers in New York this week and asked them to show me how they keep track of things.

I find that they and all other producers have a regular system of reports sent in from theatre owners all over the country, telling them how much business each picture is doing and giving the theatre man's comments on its merits or demerits. These comments in turn are based on what his patrons tell him, and so the report gives practically a nation-wide vote on each photoplay.

Now before giving the reports on "Sentimental Tommy" I want to preface it with the very important statement that, in my own humble opinion, it was the most artistic and meritorious production made in America in a long while. It had in the first place, the basic merit of a story which has become a classic in English literature. And it achieved a task that most people thought well-nigh impossible—it put the very life and spirit of the whimsical Barrie on the screen. I doubt if any picture has received more enthusiastic commendation from an artistic standpoint.

Let's see what the public thought of it. In these producers' reports pictures are rated on the new cent of theatre owners who say its commercial returns were "satisfactory." That does not mean necessarily a great success. One hundred per cent attention on the part of the report means only that it is clearing expenses and making enough profit to justify its commercial existence.

Yet "Sentimental Tommy" full of beauty and art and sincere attempts to raise the standards of motion pictures, is classed as only 58 per cent satisfactory. In other words, it is a pathetic failure, in the opinions of the majority of movie fans all over the country. It hasn't paid expenses. It is marked down as a distinct financial loss on the books of most of the theatre owners.

ON THE other hand, "The Affairs of Anatol" has not yet received one unfavorable comment. From all over the Nation, theatre owners are writing in enthusiastically telling what big business it is doing. And nobody, probably not even Cecil de Mille himself, would attempt to defend "The Affairs of Anatol" artistically. Take "Over the Hill." It is hokum, pure and simple, produced frankly for its popular appeal. It is well down from a production standpoint, but nobody would think of ranking it as a story to be proud of. Yet, last week, an official of the Fox Company told me that they are confident "Over the Hill" will play to a gross of \$3,000,000 before it is done.

NOW let's glance at the report sheets on "Sentimental Tommy." Here is one exhibitor from Massachusetts who writes: "This audience likes a picture that has more or less action, and in this production we do not seem to have any action. We had a few of the very best people in town come to see this production, but only a few liked it and the masses either stayed away or went out before the picture was over. It is well produced in every way—good photography and settings and the acting is very natural and good. As a boxoffice attraction in this city, I will have to say that it is poor."

And a Cincinnati theatre owner writes: "I had by the critics as a wonderful picture and possibly will appeal to the few who have read the book. I saw the picture in the first-run houses here and, not having read the book, I could not enjoy the picture; in fact, it was terribly drab and uninteresting. Nothing to hold your attention except the acting, which was high class. I consider a picture of that type absolutely undesirable for my audiences. . . . There have been a lot of flops by movie fans this year on account of the class of entertainment which is being offered to them and at high admission prices."

Looking on down the report sheets we find such comments as these: "Had more compliments, also more flops, than any picture I have ever played at a 240 seats." "Two times the performance action. The patrons thought his role (Tommy) silly and we had several get up and leave because the picture was so slow." "An exceptionally good picture and showed the few who saw it. Hard to account for the 'off' business. The poorest drawing-card feature picture that we have had for some time."

SO THERE you get a chance to see what the producer is an ogre against. When he has nerve enough to put out something that is really artistic. He pleases himself and a very few of the fans, but he displeases his customers, the theatre owners, because he does not attract the millions of dollars to the box office. Just a few weeks ago we had a little discussion here as to why fans were not then going to the movies, and most of our correspondents declared it was because the pictures were so low grade. Maybe this will show them why. The producer isn't to blame. He isn't a charitable institution, and if the fans won't go to see the good things but will pay millions for hokum, he is not to give 'em hokum.

SHE'S NOT GOING TO DESERT THE SCREEN



"Polly" Fredricka has announced positively that she will remain in pictures despite the many rumors she has held out to her. Ever since Miss Fredricka joined Famous Players eight or nine years ago there have been rumors of her return to the footlights, but she has never gone.

Answers to Questions by Movie Fans

ADELAIDE—Lionel Barrymore is thirty-eight and married to Doris Rankin, who frequently appears with him in pictures and on the stage.

BOBS—Elsie Ferguson is appearing in "Footlights," and Irene Castle Treman in "French Heels." Yes, both are married.

ALMA SMITH—Just as soon as I find the cast you ask for I shall send it to you. The picture you mention is an old one and the cast is not available.

PATIENT, you will soon be rewarded.

DAREDEVIL—Pauline Curley does not tell her age. She is not the youngest leading lady on the stage at present. However, she appeared on the stage at the tender age of five. Louise Lorraine is in the twenty-fifth, Elmo Lincoln is thirty-two, Kathleen O'Connor is twenty-four, Conard Myers is twenty and George Conard twenty-nine. Yes, Kathleen O'Connor is a blond, and

Louise Lorraine has an enchanting smile. I can't help you to get into the movies. My advice is to stay home and finish your school. Certainly I do not advise you to do it. How could I be cross when you write me with a pleasant letter?

BLUE DEVIL—You are the second "devil." I have had to deal with today. Are you related to Darryl? You ask for the cast of the serial "Who Is No. One?" It is not customary to publish the names of any of the players except the leading man or woman. In this serial you already know that Kathleen Clifford plays the lead. Sorry to disappoint you.

L. MARIHAN—The person who told you that Norma Tallmadge was twenty-eight years old was mistaken. She was born in Niagara Falls in 1897, which makes her twenty-four years old. Elaine Hammerstein's leading man in "Handcuffs or Kisses" was Robert Ellis.

THE TANG OF THE HEATHER IS STRONG IN THIS FILM



CONFESSIONS OF A STAR

As Told to INEZ KLUMPH

"READY now, Diana! Grab up there and kneel down on that lower part!"

I wished the greedy little director wouldn't call me by my first name; this was the first time he'd met me, and even after the years I'd been accustomed to the free and easy ways of the studio I preferred that people would know me before they did that. However, I gathered up the gauzy train of my evening gown, touched up my make-up a bit, and climbed up the little stairway that led to the steel pins where I was to kneel.

About four feet above my head was a similar plate. This was to descend on the lower one, and I was to be saved from being crushed to death by the hero, who would climb over intervening wheels and things and seize me just in time.

"I suppose you've tested all this?" I asked the director as I knelt down.

"Now don't you worry, dearie—I know my business," he told me, shifting his cigar from one corner of his mouth to the other and winking at the men who stood by, watching him admiringly. He was showing off to his friends, of course, showing them how he directed a well-known star.

I knelt down and got ready for the shot. The director gave some final directions to the man who was working the controlling lever at the back of the machine; he said that the hero wouldn't reach me in time he was to stop the machine and so avert an accident that might prove fatal to me.

"All right now, boys! Let a begin!" called the director. I missed the cue, professional practice to which I'd been used. The steel plate began to descend, and I went through the proper motions, expressing horror at the impending catastrophe, holding out my arms as the hero was supposed to start toward me, all that sort of thing.

And then I suddenly stopped, not being expressing fear and horror in real earnest. For any one could see that the hero wasn't going to arrive in time to save me, and I'd caught a real, real terrified exclamation from the man at the lever—"My God, it's stuck!"

I was going to be killed, or at least horribly maimed. There could be no doubt of that. I considered, staring at that descending square of steel that was to kill me. If I had not been so terrified with fear I would have thought of jumping the lever was only about ten feet below. But I was absolutely fascinated with horror.

I didn't even know that I was sweating, but they told me afterwards that my screams could be heard down the street below. Then sudden! a familiar voice brought me to my senses: there below me, megaphone in hand, called Derry, a good-looking young fellow, just as if nothing had gone wrong. "Keep it up, Constance! They've started up when I heard your screams. 'Right across those things, grab her, step over on the plate and grab her—keep it up!"

Suddenly, instead of the descending steel, I heard Derry's voice, that cowardly sound I'd heard before, and I was suddenly surrounded by a man had stepped in. I don't believe that he knew how to do it himself. He snatched me from beneath that descending plate just in time; the train of my frock was caught under it as it came. I looked after that he had heard when he was operating the lever had said he had been too frightened to go on, and Derry, rushing over from the next set,



calculated him into action and made him think that he'd been mistaken, and that nothing had gone wrong after all. "You've got to get out of this, honey," Derry told me when I'd crossed and left the studio with him. "You can't work with this company—it would be a fine job for you, but you'd go to me and let me know what Sunday was going to be."

"Because I was ashamed to see some girl I didn't have to ask anything of you," I told him, clinging to his arm as we walked down the dingy street. "You said that I could call you back when I was next time to see than anything else in the world. Well, it does now, but I'm a failure, in spite of the success of my pictures. I'll give up everything for you when I have something to give you."

"Don't you know that you're doing me now that you've ever been before?" he demanded. "Why, honey, I'd give anything in the world if you'd marry me today, and let me take care of you always. I've learned a thing or two since last fall, and you wouldn't ever need to fear that any one like Isabel Heath could step between us again. You needn't have a big chance to succeed, was the bait."

"Oh, I know that, dear," I protested. "But just give me one more chance to win this game, and then I'll stick it all for you."

"All right—we'll make it together. If you say so, I'll answer promptly. 'What do you think of this?' I held the screen rights to a bunch of a play a while ago; it wasn't properly worked on Broadway, and failed, but it will make a marvelous picture. I'll direct it and you can be the star—I think I've got enough money to give it the right settings and cast, and if I haven't I can borrow some. We'll put everything that's good in it into it, and then if we can swing it right, get a big releasing organization to put it out, we're made."

"I'd have to break my contract with Malvina Stuart, of course, but he hasn't lived up to his part of it, and I know that I could do it. And this would be so wonderful, working with Derry on a picture that was to make a bank."

"Oh, Derry, I will!" I cried, talking with happiness.

Lois Wilson Surprised the Studio When She Did a Jack Dempsey

Cecil B. DeMille arranged a furniture-destroying scene in "The Affairs of Anatol," with Wallace Reid as the destroyer.

William de Mille provided the similar stunt in his new picture, "Lulu," wherein Lois Wilson, in the title role of the long-suffering Lulu, finally tarries upon the DeLeon household and a wrecked the kitchen.

Among a host of other things, she bit Theodore Roberts, who plays Dwight Deason, a resounding crack on the jaw with her fist.

"By Jove," observed the veteran actor. "She carries a wallop like Dempsey."

"Miss Lulu Bell" is the prize play by Zane Grey from her own novel, and was adapted by Clara Beranger.

She's Only a Baby, but She Knows Fame

MARIE MORHOUSE is only sixteen months old—but already she has money in the bank which she earned herself. Marie, one of our letter-loving screen actresses, began her career at the age of three months, and after thirteen months not only has an enviable bank roll, but is famous in the profession.

Marie was the baby in "The Old Nest," "Repeat Hugs," stars produced by Goldwyn, in which Mary Alden, an occasional such a success as this mother. She also went on location to Big Bear with "Six Hours of Happiness," company which only about a year old.

A native daughter of the same Southernland, this "baby of all the stars" that twinkle on the silver sheet is a singing, swaying, non-singing, non-dancing all that, and a good deal more. According to Marie, the way to keep young is to have plenty of milk, and drink lots of milk. She extends to star until she has reached the mature age of five, when she will take a vacation in some exclusive kindergarten of the city.

She Surely Likes Jewels

Pauline Frederick were something like Harry's strings of beads, stars wearing thirty pieces of earrings and fifty are Jewels with her various costumes in "The Lure of Jade."



Marion Davies is being directed in a scene in "Enchantment." The cameraman is Ira H. Morgan and the director Robert G. Vignola. Not much room or privacy for the lady to do her acting, is there?

BUFFALO BILL ONCE TRIED TO ADOPT TOM MIX FOR SHOW

DID you know the Buffalo Bill once wanted to adopt Tom Mix, the Fox star? It's so. Tom told the story himself one luncheon hour while he was making "The Night Horsemen," his latest production.

At the time Tom was with the 101 Ranch show in Chicago. He was riding and roping and doing indie-raising stunts. He had known Buffalo Bill some time.

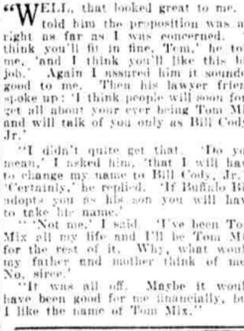
"One day Buffalo Bill, or Bill Cody, as we called him, sent for me," said Tom as the actors were gathered around him. He had some kind of a legal fellow with him. "Tom," said Bill, "some day in the near future I'm going to retire. But that should be no reason why my 'Buffalo Bill' show should close. Now, my friend here and myself believe you can carry on the show. I've always admired you. You remind me of myself when I was your age. You're a dead shot. You're a wonder. You're the roughest, toughest I ever saw. And I think you look like I did when I was your age. If you'll agree I'll adopt you as my son, carry you with the show for a couple of years, introduce you around the entire United States as my adopted son, and then I'll retire and turn the whole show over to you, taking a percentage of the earnings, but giving you the big share."

"Well, that looked great to me. I told him the proposition was all right as far as I was concerned. I think you'll be in fine form," he told me, and I think you'll like this big job. Again I assured him it sounded good to me. Then his lawyer friend spoke up: "I think people will soon forget all about your being Tom Mix, and will talk of you only as Bill Cody, Jr."

"I didn't quite get that. 'Do you mean,' I asked him, 'that I will have to change my name to Bill Cody, Jr.?' "Certainly," he replied. "If Buffalo Bill adopts you as his son you will have to take his name."

"Not me," I said. "I've been Tom Mix all my life and I'll be Tom Mix for the rest of it. Why, what would my father and mother think of me? No, since."

"It was all off. Maybe it would have been good for me financially, but I like the name of Tom Mix."



FRANK BORGAZE Director of the famous "Honor" company. He has been heard from in some time. Rumor has it that he's nearly ready to spring a surprise.

Rankin Is Youngest of Noted Stage Family

ARTHUR RANKIN, who plays an important part in "The Lure of Jade," is the youngest member of America's most famous theatrical family.

He is a grandson of McKee Rankin and Kitty Rankin, the son of Philip Rankin and Harry Davenport and the nephew of Lionel Barrymore and the late Sidney Drew.

What's He Doing

"Sunday: Very boring day. Absolutely no one on board."

"Monday: Met captain of ship. At least one man aboard."

"Tuesday: I refused to kiss captain."

"Wednesday: Captain swore he would sink ship unless I kissed him."

"Thursday: Served a thousand lives."

"Friday: A smart girl—and brave!"

FATHER IS ENGLISH, MOTHER IRISH: SHE PLAYS JEWESS

HER mother is Irish, her father English, but Dorothy was selected from hundreds of girls to play the part of a Jewess.

Thus Dorothy Richards, who plays one of the principal roles in "The Barriade," found herself in a peculiar situation.

"I speak French, Spanish, German, and have lived in European countries virtually all of my eighteen years," says the actress, "so the role of an unhappy wife in a Jewish family struck me as being a little odd."

Miss Richards has spent most of her childhood in France, Germany and Spain.

Her mother, Madam Martha Richards, made her debut in French opera as a prima donna many years ago. Madam Richards was a protégée of Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt, and it was through the influence of Mrs. Vanderbilt that Dorothy's mother received her chance in the French metropolis.

"While while mother had such a wonderful voice," continued Miss Richards, "I couldn't even learn to sing. Oh, of course, I can burst out into song and can repeat in French, German or Spanish all of the leading soprano roles which I gathered from hearing mother sing, but I haven't what you call a voice."

DOROTHY came to America at the outbreak of war. She was placed in Notre Dame Academy at Boston and it was while attending the convent that the petite actress learned to speak English.

Miss Richards' first legitimate role was played last year in "Deburau," a Polshus production, which ran all season in New York City.

"But I like pictures," smiled the little girl, "with plenty of action and dramatic situations. I want pictures with sports so I can ride and swim. Between pictures Miss Richards makes her home at Bayside, Long Island."

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DORIS MAY who is now appearing as a star in comedy drama, has hit upon an absolutely new idea in four-footed puppets. She cherishes a three-month-old pup which she describes as being "just out."

Doris May Has Adopted Stray Doggie as Mascot

WHILE other stars of the stage and screen make pampered pets of bulldogs, wolfhounds and poodles of high degree, Doris May didn't pick her mascot from the ranks of canine aristocracy.

Miss May, who is now appearing as a star in comedy drama, has hit upon an absolutely new idea in four-footed puppets. She cherishes a three-month-old pup which she describes as being "just out."

Miss May found her mascot a few weeks ago, and now Buddy, as he is called, has the run of the studio where the young star is making ready for her second starring production to follow: "The Foolish Age."

Buddy is virtually lord of all he surveys, but his great prestige among the film players is based more upon size than on real power. It had been unmercifully whipped by a bigger dog when Miss May found him in the street. There he sprawled nursing a wounded leg. Miss May was so touched by the sight that she picked up the wounded little animal and carried him to the studio, where first aid was administered and Buddy was formally launched as his career as chief mascot of the Doris May producing unit.

ALHAMBRA Special Feature: "The Affairs of Anatol"	GRANT BETTY COMPTON CREA NORTHERN CHARLES RAY	AT WEST CHESTER RIVALTO FALLING FREDERICK IDLE HOUR THE NIXON-NIRDLINGER THEATRES
ALLEGHENY "The Affairs of Anatol"	IMPERIAL TOM MIX Leligh Palace MAY ALLISON	BELMONT "The Affairs of Anatol"
APOLLO ELSIE FERGUSON	LIBERTY BERT LYELL	CEDAR "God's Country and the Law"
ARCADE ETHEL CLAYTON	OVERBROOK WANDA HAWLEY	COLISEUM "The Affairs of Anatol"
ASTOR "A Tale of Two Worlds"	PALACE "The Affairs of Anatol"	JUMBO "THREE SEVENS"
BALTIMORE HOPE HAMPTON	PRINCESS "THE SHARK MASTER"	LEADER "The Affairs of Anatol"
BENN William A. Brady's "LIFE"	RIVALTO "THE OLD NEST"	LOCUST "The Affairs of Anatol"
BLUEBIRD ETHEL CLAYTON	RUBY "THE SKY PILOT"	NIXON "THE GOLDEN TRAIL"
BROADWAY LIONEL BARRYMORE	SAVOY MAY ALLISON	RIVOLI ELSIE FERGUSON
CAPITOL PAULINE FREDERICK	SHERWOOD BEBE DANIELS	STRAND "The Affairs of Anatol"
COLONIAL "The Affairs of Anatol"	STANLEY "Dangerous Curve Ahead"	AT OTHER THEATRES MEMBERS OF M.P.T.O.A.
DARRY THEATRE NORMA TALMADGE	STANTON "OVER THE HILL"	Germantown VIOLA DANA
EMPRESS "NOMADS OF THE NORTH"	FRANKFORD Eugene O'Brien, "Worlds Apart"	JEFFERSON "THE GREAT LOVER"
FAIRMOUNT JACK HOXIE	GLOBE DUSTIN FARNUM	PARK BETTY COMPTON
FAMILY TOM MIX		WEST ALLEGHENY NORMA TALMADGE
56TH ST. "NOT GUILTY"		